

VZCZCXYZ0000
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHTU #2111 2281354
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 161354Z AUG 06
FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1584
INFO RUEHXX/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0059

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 002111

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

FOR NEA/MAG, IO/UNP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/16/2016
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [MOPS](#) [UN](#) [UNSC](#) [IS](#) [LE](#) [TS](#)
SUBJECT: LEBANON: TUNISIA WELCOMES UNSCR 1701; CALLS FOR
ARAB SUMMIT ON RECONSTRUCTION

REF: TUNIS 2085

Classified By: CDA David Ballard for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: The GOT has officially welcomed UNSCR 1701 on Lebanon, releasing a statement expressing its "great satisfaction" with the resolution, which it characterized as a "first step" to the return to peaceful efforts in the search for a negotiated solution. President Ben Ali on August 14 called for an emergency Arab League summit to discuss the violence in the Middle East and to pledge support for reconstruction in Lebanon and the Palestinian territories. Asked about the response of Arab League partners to Ben Ali's proposal, an MFA interlocutor noted simply that "we will find out" at the Arab League Ministerial in Cairo on August 18. Embassy has asked the MFA to provide information about any ongoing GOT humanitarian aid efforts for the Lebanese and Palestinian people. End Summary.

¶2. (U) The Tunisian press has widely reported the GOT's twin reactions to the cease-fire in Lebanon: President Ben Ali on August 14 called for an emergency Arab League summit to discuss the violence in the Middle East and pledge collective support for the reconstruction of Lebanon and the Palestinian territories to "erase the consequences of the large devastation." On the same date, the MFA issued a statement expressing its "great satisfaction" with the resolution, saying that it represented a "first step toward the cessation of bloodshed and the return to peaceful efforts in the search for a negotiated solution."

¶3. (C) In an August 16 meeting with Charge on a range of issues, MFA Deputy Director for the Americas Moez Sinaoui confirmed these GOT responses. When asked about reactions of Arab League partners to Ben Ali's emergency summit proposal, Sinaoui shrugged that "we will find out" at the Arab League Ministerial scheduled to be held in Cairo on Friday, August 18.

¶4. (C) The local press continues its periodic coverage of Tunisian efforts to provide humanitarian aid to Lebanon and the Palestinian territories. For example, following a July 21 telcon between Ben Ali and Prime Minister Siniora in which Ben Ali reportedly promised humanitarian assistance, the media reported that a bank account had been opened to accept donations from the public. In addition, several blood drives were launched, some of which were promoted by text message campaigns. Tunisian media on August 14 reported that Ben Ali had asked the Minister of Public Health to send the collected blood and other medical supplies as soon as possible to the Lebanese and Palestinian people. He also directed that a medical team be dispatched to help treat the wounded. Charge asked Sinaoui about the status of these and any other efforts to provide humanitarian assistance. Sinaoui undertook to

look into the matter and provide any relevant information.
BALLARD